

# Dicing With Death for Treasure of \$6,000,000 in the Lusitania's Hold



CURTAIN-DROP SET-SCENE SHOWING ARMORED DIVER ON SEA FLOOR BESIDE A SUNKEN VESSEL'S STRONG BOX.

BY IRVING S. SAYFORD

HOW would it please you, in this day of super-thrills, when man ascends nonchalantly before breakfast to bat the soaring eagle on the wing and as lightly at noon descends to lunch among the fishes? How would it allure you to be hitched by your head to the steel cable of a deck-boom and dropped like a plummet forty-seven fathoms deep in the Irish sea, there, bronze-armored, in the black chambers of a casket ship, to dice with death for a huge stake of treasure and of jewels?

Love of gold fears few sepulchers, shrinks from no ghosts. Seven years and more the Lusitania's dead have slept, apart. No hymn of funeral

surf or elegy of tide or the brave music of the starlight winds has played across their grave. But now at last the silence and the darkness and the strange, restless shapes with creature eyes that alone have kept the watch must give their vigil over—for a time. Love of gold has weighed anchors on a quest!

There sailed a few days ago from the Kensington docks of Cramp's shipyard, in Philadelphia, the United States Shipping Board-built steamship Blakely, 3,600 tons, twin-screw, 12.5 knots, bound for an open-sea position eight miles south of Old Head of Kinsale, Ireland. There, five miles outside Great Britain's three-mile jurisdictional limit, lies the tor-

**STEAMSHIP Blakely, Built by the U. S. Shipping Board, Has Left Philadelphia, Bound for An Open-Sea Position Eight Miles South of Old Head of Kinsale, Ireland, Where Great Ocean Liner Lies at Bottom of the Sea—Torpedo-Wrecked Vessel Contains \$5,000,000 in Gold Bullion Alone, Locked in the Ship's Strong Room—New Ideas in Attempting to Get at Treasure—Work for Super-divers.**

pedoed wreck of the Cunard Line's Lusitania, in her strong room \$5,000,000 in gold bullion and \$1,000,000 in passengers' money and jewels. The British admiralty's survey soundings place her upon an even keel, sunk only five or six feet on a gravelly bottom in 285 feet of water, her funnels undamaged.

Benjamin Franklin Leavitt of Boston and Philadelphia, inventor of the manganese-bronze, non-crushable, deep-sea diving suit and organizer and head of the Lusitania Salvaging Company, which bears his name, brings up the \$6,000,000 loot of the murdered ship, it will be the second time in marine annals of the world that any such depth feat has been accomplished, and it will be the forerunner of other sub-sea "raids" even more spectacularly rich.

One hundred and fifty feet is the conceded depth at which a diver in a standard (collapsible) suit can do any salvage work. Very few can accomplish anything and live below 125 feet. The pressure of the water, which increases by one pound to the square inch for each twenty-seven inches of descent below the fifty-foot mark is too great for heart and circulation to sustain. It is of record that three divers went down in standard suits 225 feet to attach hoisting chains to the United States F-4, sunk by internal explosion in Honolulu harbor in 1916, but one of the daring men was brought up dead, another paid with a prolonged stay in the hospital. The third was not seriously injured.

Against this discouraging result stands the record of the cargo salvaging of the lake steamship Pewabic by Mr. Leavitt in 1916, the "first" success adverted to in a foregoing paragraph, to which the proposed salvaging of the Lusitania will range as second achievement.

On her bridal trip the Pewabic, upon a spring evening in 1865, with excursionists dancing to music on her deck, was in collision with a sister ship, and sank in twenty minutes—the Lusitania's death time—in 176 feet off Thunder Bay Island, in Lake



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN LEAVITT, INVENTOR OF THE BRONZE DIVING SUIT AND SEEKER OF LOST TREASURES OF THE SEAS.

Huron. One hundred and twenty-six persons perished. Within the thirty years preceding 1917 three attempts and suits 225 feet to attach hoisting chains to the United States F-4, sunk by internal explosion in Honolulu harbor in 1916, but one of the daring men was brought up dead, another paid with a prolonged stay in the hospital. The third was not seriously injured.

main of value of the Pewabic's cargo, and in these unsuccessful efforts the lives of seven divers were sacrificed and \$200,000 was spent. The diving suits used were the only sort known—the standard type, made of leather, canvas, rubber, glass and iron or lead weighting.

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Then, one October day in 1916, the steamship Mary Ethel waddled out from the Morgan Transportation Company's Traverse City docks on to the choppy ruffles of Grand Traverse bay, Lake Michigan. On her deck stood a tall, gray-haired, quizzical-faced man of a greatness in his ways, who was looking for trouble and satisfied he wouldn't find it. Shake hands with Benjamin Franklin Leavitt, down-east Yankee, while the Mary Ethel's mate sounds for depths. That is what the gentleman from Boston is after—depths. Make 'em deep!

Previous to the Traverse bay dives all helmets had crushed in at a depth of 200 feet, he said, under the element's pressure of ninety pounds to the square inch. The Traverse bay dive of 261 feet encountered a pressure of 160 pounds, the Lake Huron dive of 176 feet supported eighty pounds, and the Leavitt suit had been previously tank-tested to a pressure of 220 pounds per square inch, which would obtain at a depth of 500 feet.

The only discomfort he experienced in the 261-foot dive, Mr. Leavitt reported, was the cold at that depth. After being down and walking about on the lake floor forty-five minutes, he had pondered the deck:

"Getting a bit chilly down here—below 40 degrees. Nothing more for me to do. Guess I'll come up." Though it had taken him eight months and cost him \$7,000 to construct this first bronze-copper, rubber-glass suit, Mr. Leavitt scrapped it after the Traverse bay dives, "for," he said, "I had learned more by a couple of hours' actual experience than eighteen months' theorizing had taught me. And I set about at once to build a better suit. The eight we are taking along on the Lusitania trip are a developed type 50 per cent superior to the ones I used successfully in 1916 in Lake Michigan and in 1917 in Lake Huron.

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"I say that I 'used successfully.' By this I mean exactly what those words convey, and therein lies assurance that I shall have no difficulty making my way into the interior of the Lusitania, cutting through the vessel's topmost or upper promenade deck to gain access to the purser's strong room in the grand entrance on the third or saloon deck amidships, exactly in the center of the vessel's length.

"The upper promenade deck is at the 250-foot depth level, and I shall not have to even descend to the sea floor at 285 feet if I do not wish. As I have demonstrated entire absence of danger and entire freedom of locomotion and lateral manipulation of the arms at 361 feet, there is nothing to fear. The excess of the pressure density of the ocean's salt water over the lake's fresh water is too trivial to be figured in.

"The 315 tons of copper, 150 tons of iron ore, 135 tons of lead (in a good state of preservation) and other valuables I and my divers salvaged from the Pewabic at 176 feet cost me in the completed operations \$20,000, and I sold the lot for \$26,000. That is the money factor of it. The importance fact established is that inventive resources has at last overcome a barrier that had stood for centuries on the salvaging of treasure from deep-sea wrecks.

"I have no hesitation in saying that I did not select the Lusitania for this first deep-sea salvaging as much for the \$6,000,000 of gold and jewelry in her hold—there are far richer wrecks for the money attracting publicity attaching to that vessel beyond all others. The expense of the Lusitania salvaging will be \$160,000, and the Blakely will sail without one unpaid bill in her wake.

"While I anticipate no interference by either Great Britain or the United States to block my entering the Lusitania, I shall, when I have recovered

the treasure, take it to neither that country nor to this, but to a country whose admiralty court will give me the largest salvage award. I shall be awarded more than 75 per cent of the \$6,000,000.

"The Lusitania lies five miles outside Great Britain's three-mile limit of jurisdiction, established by international law. But I shall have a care on this voyage to touch at no point, anywhere in the world, within her three-mile zone. The Blakely sails with cold storage and other supplies for four months without need of replenishment of any sort for her complement of sixty officers and crew, including my divers and operators. Besides myself, there are four experienced divers, all of them formerly in the ship service of the United States government, and the Blakely carries her own ship's doctor.

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"ALL I need and want to salvage the Lusitania treasure is twenty-one diving days. By that I mean twenty-one days during which we can work on the job. You cannot handle diving equipment in a rough sea. The salvage vessel must be kept in place above the wreck by bow and stern anchors led to buoys, and the sea must be calm enough to not threaten the diving and electric light cables. Because weather conditions along the Irish coast are often anything but ideal, four months have been allowed for the passage out, the work and the return."

"And after the return, what?" The gray man from Boston smiled. A shrewd smile has he. Never could he have understated Sol Smith Russell in "The Post-Religion."

He would say there is the imagination of genius in the Leavitt smile, but nothing of the futile dreamer. His littered desk reminds you not of Mr. Rockefeller's lately memorized mahogany inhabited by a neat pile of letters at the left, a neat and much smaller set of the right, and a little pad for the great man in between. No—indeed, no. The desk of Leavitt is as disreputable as the kit bag of Philip Gibbs when that painter on Mr. Kipling's ten-league canvas came home from many battle fronts to be an English knight. In the office Mr. Leavitt is no second offender in the wearing of a coat.

The first descent to the Lusitania will be made by himself, Mr. Leavitt said, and not until he has completed a survey of the vessel's position and condition of the employed divers will he be permitted to go down. They will work in two-hour shifts, though the oxygen tank and caustic soda purifying tank (the latter for automatic removal of the poisonous carbon-dioxide gas contained in the diver's exhaled breath) are "margin-charged," the latter for four hours' work, the latter for six.

Attached to the diver's head will be a sound amplifying dictaphone, so that at all times while submerged he can—and he will be under orders to do so continuously—converse in the ordinary tone of voice with those on the Blakely's deck. He will report, thus, minute-to-minute progress of his observations and work, direct the movement by deck machinery of his submarine light, and order the shifting and hoisting operations when tackle or clam scoop is to grip and raise an object.

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A 250-candlepower Mazda lamp, containing a half-inch protective globe of pyrex (quartz) glass, will enable the diver to see dimly a distance of seven feet. Asked why he did not provide a more powerful light, Mr. Leavitt replied that magnification of candlepower is useless, because a submarine beam cannot be thrown, and 250 candlepower at the Lusitania's depth gives the same penetrative diffusion as would 1,500 candlepower. Why, he said, he could not explain. The efficacy of multiplication ceases below sixty feet. The light, weighted to 100 pounds, will depend from another point of the diver's boom which handles the cargo tackle, or clam.

The diver will wear the heaviest obtainable woolen underclothing; a chauffeur's khaki union-all and mackinac socks—no shoes. He will experience in the summer season a temperature of about 44 degrees while working at the Lusitania's depth, and with him inside will weigh seventy-five pounds at any submergence depth, the weight equalization being due to the density of the water. Indeed, he will have to exert upon the surrounding water a body pressure of twenty pounds in order to bend forward from the waist.

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He will be lowered and raised by a seven-eighths-inch flexible cable of six strands. It is tested to lift ten tons, is non-twisting, contains in its core the diver's telephone wire, and consumed three years in perfecting. The Blakely's cargo boom, shipped at New York on the passage out, is of skeleton construction and capable of handling a weight of fifty tons.

No one other constructional part of the bronze suit promises the diver such immunity of accident as the attachment of oxygen and soda tanks, because they do away entirely with the ever-dangerous and frequently fatal air hose feed on which he has had to depend for breath. Its entanglement has menaced many lives, its severing or pinch stoppage has caused many deaths. Second in safety, the tank's protected telephone communication. The diver will not do continuously talk with the deck will be hauled up without request and against his protest.

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DYNAMITE, Mr. Leavitt said, cannot be used successfully at the Lusitania's or any other considerable depth. It disintegrates. Hence the Blakely on her way out touched at the du Pont plant, opposite Wilmington, Del., and took on 150 quarts of nitroglycerin, sufficient for eight submarine blasts.

Asked whether he would undertake an exploration of the Lusitania to determine the charges made and officially denied that the Cunarder carried contraband of war in the form



THE FACE IN THE HELMET WINDOW OF THE ARMORED SUIT. THIS PHOTO SHOWS MR. LEAVITT INSIDE HIS ARMORED SUIT, BESIDE HIM STANDS THE DECK OPERATOR WHO ATTENDED HIM FROM THE SALVAGE SHIP IN THE PEWABIC RECOVERY.

of guns and ammunition, a claim set up by Germany in defense of the murder, Mr. Leavitt replied that his one business in the vessel's hull is to salvage the \$6,000,000 of treasure, and he did not propose even to explore staterooms for valuables which may have been there instead of in the purser's keep when the ship went down twenty minutes after being torpedoed. He expected, however, to encounter in the dim passages of the seven-year casket the bodies, or parts of the

bodies of many of its 1,935 victims and the bones of many others who perished around about. From the Lake Huron wreck, Pewabic, after a lapse of half a century, Mr. Leavitt brought up for burial a man's well fleshed arm, from whose finger he wears today an emerald ring, and the unutilized torso of a woman; also a Bible and a German dictionary, which, being dried, showed almost no blurring of the print. (Copyright, 1922.)

## THE SORCERER.

By Mme. Lucie Delarue

Translated From the French BY WILLIAM L. McPHERSON.

IT WAS in Tunis, in the Maltese quarter, near the sea gate. A family from Malta, like so many others, lived there in a dingy lodging, amid poverty, dirt and squallors. Through the door, always open on the narrow, crowded street, one could see the comings and goings of the peddlers of fruits and vegetables, the stalls in which so many things are cooked in oil, the gaily painted Arab carriages, the jumble of Mussulmans in soft-colored gaudouls and of the Maltese residents, men with fur caps on at 90 degrees in the shade and women dressed in heavy black, as foul and unsightly as beggars.

Smells likewise penetrated into the house, the pungent odors of Italian cooking, Arab musk and whiffs of flowers. The indigo sky, a soft sapphire blue, followed above the roofs the course of the straight, narrow street.

When they didn't quibble or fight the members of the family—father, mother and six children—engaged in those confusing calculations which are the rage in that part of the world. No people could be more superstitious or fanatical than the Maltese—even the Sicilians. In the processions in which they take out in statue of the virgin one sees them running to throw on the platform on which the madonna is carried all that they have at home in the way of valuables, and especially of jewelry—the mother's little gold chain, the father's watch, and so forth. But when the procession is over each one takes back his property, for it was a question of loans, not of gifts.

As to the calculations in question: One of the children falls down while playing. At once the whole family exclaims, "No. 34!" The mother raises her arms to heaven. All voices cry: "No. 34!" For each event and each gesture represents a number which all the world knows by heart. At the end of the day they add the figures, and then by a series of difficult operations, combining the day's total with the totals of preceding days, they obtain a number which forecasts the winning number of one knows not what lottery, always running in this quarter of Tunis.

This form of collective neurosthenia is met with everywhere in the colony. It explains how there can happen adventures, of which the above mentioned family was the victim.

One morning they saw entering through the open door, murmuring ceremonies salutations, a Maugrabine—that is to say, an Arab from Morocco—wearing a white robe under a black cloak with a cowl, with features straight and strongly marked, eyes close together and a look which held and dominated you.

Morocco is pre-eminently a land of sorcery. The Maltese know this, as everybody else does. So the Maugrabine's appearance impressed the family even to the point of silencing the daily disputation.

"Close the door!" the sorcerer ordered. The father ran and closed it. "The children must go outside."

When only the father and mother were left he said:

"I CAME to hunt you up because my art has revealed to me that there is a treasure concealed in your house. I had the revelation last night and I hurried here to tell you. For Allah sends me to the poor to lift the burdens from their shoulders. This treasure is hidden under your bed, and I am going to show it to you, if such is your wish."

With hands clasped, the miserable couple listened.

"May God preserve you," said the husband. "We have no other wish."

"Good!" said the sorcerer.

He approached the dirty couch, made mysterious signs about it, and uttered incantations. The bed turned brusquely to the man and the woman and fixed them alternately with a devouring look.

"Now," he ordered the husband, "pull the bed out and come close to me, both of you."

The bed pulled out, a double cry of amazement filled the humble room. For a flagstone, never before seen, was found in the corner. A heavy iron ring was attached to it.

"Lift the ring."

The man bent down and lifted it. A stairway, leading underground, appeared.

"Let us go down!"

Pale and trembling, the two Maltese followed the Moroccan. At the foot of the stairway a sudden illumination came to them from something which shone in the recesses of the cellar which they entered. It was a heap of gold pieces, nine feet high and at least fifteen feet wide, guarded by two naked negroes, motionless and threatening, each with a bare sword in his hand. When the husband and wife, dumb with surprise, fear and joy, had looked at it for a time, a voice cried:

"Now, we must go upstairs again."

After the flagstone was put in place and the bed pushed back the Maugrabine explained:

"I must prepare an enchantment to get rid of the negroes who guard the treasure. The pile of gold is yours four days from now at this hour, if you give me what I need to work with for the four nights."

The wife, her teeth chattering, asked:

"What do you need?"

"I need incenses, balms and many other things which I can't tell you about. Let us say sixty duros. Give me them at once and in four days the negroes will have disappeared. But don't speak to any one of this affair, not even to your children. In that case all would be lost. Don't think of the bed before I come back, and don't look under it!"

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THE husband stared at his wife. Three hundred francs—it was almost their entire capital. They had in all 350 francs, the savings of fifteen years.

"Give him the sixty duros," she said, still in a dream.

The Moroccan took the money without a look, apparently absorbed in his magic calculations. He didn't even count it, and murmured:

"I will give you a list of the purchases. There is no time to lose now."

At the door he made some more ceremonious salutations, while the other two kissed his hands, which he modestly drew back.

"Do not thank me, O my son and my daughter! I do it in the sight of Allah! If I give you happiness I shall be rewarded beyond my deserts. When he was gone the poor couple fell into each other's arms and wept. They didn't sleep for four nights. Their magnificent hopes wouldn't let them. Moreover, they were dreadfully afraid of lying in the bed under which lived the two negroes they had seen.

The morning of the fourth day they sent the children away. Fervently, with hands dilated and twitching, they waited.

Alas! They are still waiting. Victims of the hypnotic power of the impostor, they searched for two months under the bed for the flagstone and the ring. But they found only dusty and broken flooring, just as it had always been. And the worst of the affair is that they are not alone in this predicament, and that more than one case in the courts of Tunis deals and will deal with equally incredible phantasmagoria.

## Sad Lot of Little Peking Emperor

After Picking the Beautiful Lady Jung and Lady Tuan for His Brides, the Marriage Is Held Up Because There Is No Money in The Treasury—The Son of Heaven Sits Disconsolate in His Forbidden City Palace and Bemoans Bachelor-dom.

Patrick Gallagher, the author of this article, lives close to the imperial palace in Peking. He has been writing about oriental affairs since 1902, when he first went to China. The facts in this article were obtained first hand.

BY PATRICK GALLAGHER.

"THE Lord of Ten Thousand Years! What's the use if you can't treat your brides to the proper sort of wedding?"

"Who wants to be an emperor, yet too poor to buy jade bangles for his best girls?"

No! The printer hasn't blundered; "brides" and "best girls" are correct. The questions are being asked today by his imperial majesty, Hsuan Tung, Manchu emperor and Son of Heaven, as he sits under the tented roof of his pavilion behind the huge purple walls of the Forbidden city in Peking, China.

His majesty is sixteen years, four months and some days old, according to our way of counting. In Asia the baby is a year old at birth, so Hsuan Tung is over seventeen in his own country. That is the least of his troubles. He has picked out two little Manchu ladies to be his brides, to love and cherish forever and afterward, and he wants to do the thing, or things, right. The bankrupt but disinherited Chinese republic insists upon getting in his majesty's way. Under an agreement promising him \$2,000,000 a year for abdicating the throne in 1912 it admits owing him several millions, but it says it cannot pay. Between the lack of these sentimental and sordid facts a pathetic comedy has been written into the annals of the court of Peking.

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YOUNG Hsuan Tung is a slender, pale youth; short for his age, but with the long, oval face of his Manchu family. He has large, dreamy eyes and a slender nose. Manchu eyes are not upturned, like those of their Chinese kin. They have preserved many marks of resemblance to the parent Jewish stock, to which some people say they belong.

His father, Prince Chun, is the younger brother of the late Emperor Kwang Hsu, who was poisoned in November, 1908, by order of the great dowager empress when she was told she was dying. She chose Chun's little baby, Pu Yi, as successor to the throne, and, in accordance with old custom, he was given a new name, Hsuan Tung, because it is highly improper even to whisper the personal name of the Son of Heaven, whose job it is to pray for the people at the great white marble altar of heaven and see to it that the rain comes at the right time for the farmers



Hsuan Tung. (Courtesy of Asia Magazine.)

and keep the dog from eating the moon or the sun on occasion of eclipses. The name Hsuan Tung was supposed to bring the baby emperor good luck, but all the luck he has had has been very bad indeed.

An English tutor, author of several very good books about the Chinese, has tried to make a man out of Hsuan Tung. He has taught the boy English and French, and other western things. Bad blood, bad associations and bad habits hamper Hsuan Tung. Undoubtedly he is going the way of his immediate ancestors.

For several generations, practically since the really fine Emperor Chien Lung, what are called "wolves and foxes" have ruled the Manchu court. These "wolves and foxes" are the eunuchs and concubines of the harem, unnatural creatures who concoct and stage plays that would shock even Broadway. The "wiggles" of our tea dancers came from Peking by way of Paris and other parts. It was first danced by a famous male player nicknamed "Cobbler's Wax Li."

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THE two little girls to whom Hsuan Tung had engaged himself are the Lady Jung and the Lady Tuan. The latter is a grandchild of a Manchu hero. He was given the choice of joining up with Sun Yat Sen or having his head cut off by a rebel with a long and ugly sword. He knelt down without hesitation and said to pray for the people at the great white marble altar of heaven and see to it that the rain comes at the right time for the farmers

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broken marbles at the palace gates. Inside the young Son of Heaven is choosing two wives from the season's crop of Manchu buds.

His imperial majesty is seated on a high chair. Several officials and one or two ladies of high rank stand close to him. A troop of little Manchu misses, all duly certified, are led in.

THE girls mince before "The Lord of Ten Thousand Years." They know they are on parade. All desire to catch and hold his majesty's eye, which among them may become empress and order the others about?

Their mammas have told them all about their great day of opportunity, and each has been dressed up in her best, looped into the stiff, embroidered robes of state, scented and painted and powdered. The long, black hair twisted around a bangle placed flat on the crown of each little head, and on top of all the tall, flapping head-dress, with its beaded "rabbit ears."

His diminutive majesty looks them over with an air of assumed boredom—but he picks out the beauties. As times are so hard, he is limited to two, where his ancestors have sometimes indulged in scores, and more than one in hundreds. He makes his choice very carefully, nods to the chamberlain, and the girls prostrate themselves many times and back out.

Later the chosen damsels are presented to the emperor for a final test. Then the astrologers take charge.

How about the horoscope? Do the exact hours and conditions of birth unite properly with the imperial chart of fate?

The court astrologers sit around a table with many queer writings and drawings in front of them. They drink many cups of tea and continue debates much older than Confucius. If the old man up in the stars has tied the boy and the girls at birth with the red string of marriage all is well beyond the Peiho. If not, all must be begun over again.

I was in Peking when the betrothal preliminaries were being arranged, and I was told that the court astrologers disagreed over the emperor's choice. This was given as the cause of a terrible scene in the palace, when the Princess Chun, mother of Hsuan Tung, called the Chin concubine "an old cat." The concubine took her revenge in the Forbidden city way. She gave the princess-mother an overdose of opium and that ended the argument.

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THE princess died. The emperor suddenly discovered that he was a little boy, robbed of his mother. Prostrate before the corpse, he wailed and begged death to give her back to him.

For a full month Peking was in mourning. The body was removed to the Chun Palace, near the Drum Tower in the West city, Manchus came from near and far to give reverence to the imperial dead.

A month after the crime, about 2 o'clock in a stilling night, Mrs. Gallagher and I stood close to the big red coffin as it stood stately servitors carried it from the Chun courtyard. Paper prayers fluttered and glistened like flies about the flaming torches. Bands with ancient instruments played an old-time Manchu dead march that sounded very much like the howling of tortured hyenas. Small fat boys on shaggy Mongol ponies, with harmless bows and quivers and little wooden swords acted the part of the famous banner-men. Figures of a power that is past, Manchus and Chinese prostrated themselves in dust. Dim shadows of a power that may come.

And how, only a few months later—so brief is Manchu grief—the young emperor wants to have weddings and things, but he hasn't the price.